

**Opening remarks:**

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**Anthony Iarocci read a letter from a gentleman (Ralph ?) who shared his thoughts on the importance of Cooperative Research between industry and scientists. In particular he experienced this while serving on the New England Council.**

**1. Research Direction**

**Iarocci asked the group specifically where to begin this effort (i.e., what research specifically to aim for). He pointed out that we have the research recommendations from the AW that we all feel strongly about the importance of. However, as Mr. Iarocci pointed out the individuals in this sub group (fishers and scientists) probably have the best idea as to what the most important research needs are. Therefore, it was felt that this group should identify the pertinent research items.**

**A. Education**

- 1. Ed Schuster (from St. Croix) initiated the conversation regarding a strong need for education of fishers. As one example Ed brought up the need to illustrate to fishers why the harvest of 'very small fish' or the over exploitation of spawning aggregations could produce negative benefits on the populations.**

**a. This led to a more lengthy discussion regarding education of fisher, securing funds for education . More comprehensive involvement of SeaGrant for this effort was discussed in general. Along these lines, Ed. (from St. Croix) asked if a workshop could be held along these lines to inform fishermen of the need for research, outline important research items needed for stock assessment.**

**B. Basic Research Needs and how to proceed**

- 2. Iarocci then suggested the group identify/list who might be the key individuals to involve in a workshop so the group was going to do this.**

**C. Anthony asked the group what might be the first chief research item**

- a. Several of the group (in particular Josh N.) identified the need to need in the US VI to know catch (landings by species) as opposed to the broad generalization of landings by families/species groups.**
- b. The 2<sup>nd</sup> item that was felt of immediate need for was more detailed information on effort in particular as to individual fishing trips, better and more precise location information on fishing trips**

- c. Josh N. suggested the 3<sup>rd</sup> immediate area to include an effort to acquire a perspective on these fisheries as regards to habitats, spawning sites, and cyclical type characteristics of the populations
- d. One of the group initiated a discussion re' a research item/project that could provide better information on the detailed species catch uncertainty in the US VI. Nancie suggested that a pilot survey of a logbook system be implemented in the USVI patterned similar to the New Zealand rock lobster fishery. The group was very positive about this.
- e. E. Geno (from PR) pointed out that we have come a long way in a short time with our knowledge of the fisheries. However, he noted that the biggest unknown in PR one of the biggest unknowns in PR is the recreational catch. He pointed out that there are 80,000 sport vessels in PR. He also noted that although the consensus is that the 'salt water anglers' is about 50% of the total removals that the recreational component is steadily increasing. He suggested that an immediate need for a census of the recreational harvest.
- f. Joe Kimmel discussing two points:
  - a. In terms of recreational Joe Kimmel
  - b. Re' Key Species to Consider research priority for: The SFA has a list of species that information on stock status is considered critical for. One of these is queen conch and the group felt that this need was for the entire region. Another species or species group was the grouper family, in particular yellowfin tiger (and yellowedge and tiger as 2<sup>nd</sup> grouper priority). In addition, a 3<sup>rd</sup> priority for SEDAR would be one parrotfish species and a 4<sup>th</sup> red hind.
- g. Mark ? from the Nature Conservancy brought up the issue of 'Alternative Livelihoods' in the region. This initiated conversation from Geno Peneiro (of PR) that in PR they have already dealt with this topic. They have discussed this and the feeling is that they are not going to quit being commercial fisherman. Instead, he suggested what is needed in exploration of more optimal harvesting strategies
- h. The last research idea was suggested by Mark (St. Croix) was to look more closely at wetlands restoration--- this topic should go into the 'habitat' research item.